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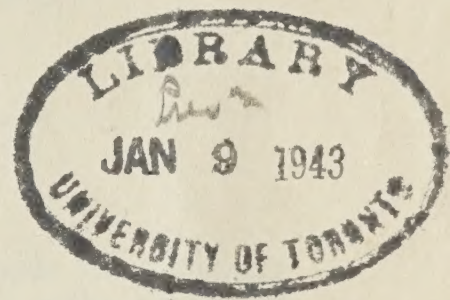
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CANADA AND THE WAR

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TEMPERANCE
AND A TOTAL WAR EFFORT

BROADCAST



by



Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING, M.P.

Prime Minister of Canada

OTTAWA, DECEMBER 16, 1942



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TEMPERANCE AND A TOTAL WAR EFFORT

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Ottawa, December 16, 1942

From the outset of the war, the Canadian people have clearly shown that it is their desire to help in every way to make Canada's war effort as effective as possible. To every appeal, whether for fighting men, for financial assistance, for war industries, for medical supplies, for auxiliary services, for civil defence and air raid precautions, for blood donations, for voluntary rationing, for salvage and conservation, or for any of the hundreds of other ways in which the individual citizen can serve, the response of the majority of our people has been splendid.

What Each Can Do to Help

Old and young, in all walks of life, are not only willing but eager to make their contribution to the winning of the war. From all quarters of the Dominion, men and women continue to ask of the government: What can *I* do to help the war effort? Tonight, I wish, at least in one particular, to answer that question, and in so doing to make an appeal for yet another kind of personal service. Like other forms of service, this one involves a measure of self-denial, and even more, perhaps, of self-discipline. Self-denial and self-discipline, however, will be recognized as the outstanding qualities of a good soldier. From the service I have in mind no one can be debarred because of age, physical disability, lack of opportunity, or for any other reason. I refer to temperance in the use of alcoholic beverages as a contribution to a total war effort. Here is a way in which everyone in Canada can help.

If the military might of Germany and Japan are ultimately to be crushed, the United Nations, one and all, must definitely and urgently strive toward a total war effort. To achieve an all-out effort in Canada will demand from men and women of every province an ever-increasing measure of individual self-denial and self-discipline.

Temperance Essential to a Total Effort

Regardless of what one's attitude towards prohibition may be, temperance is something against which, at a time of war, no reasonable protest can be made. Its importance as an essential element in achieving a total war effort is supported by facts, which, in themselves, are conclusive. It is of that aspect of Canada's war effort that, on behalf of the government, I wish to speak to you tonight.

No one will deny that the excessive use of alcohol and alcoholic beverages would do more than any other single factor to make impossible a total war effort. Fortunately, the Canadian people in all their habits, are essentially a temperate people. I doubt, however, if we begin to appreciate the extent to which war itself, and the excitement and environments created by war foster dangerous inclinations and tendencies. The increased consumption of alcoholic beverages in Canada since the outbreak of war is one evidence of this. Nor do we begin to have a clear appreciation of what the increase in consumption of alcoholic beverages in wartime means in increased risk, and in loss of efficiency to the fighting and working forces of the country.

Increased Consumption of Spirits, Wine and Beer

Since the outbreak of war, there has been in our country a steady increase in the consumption of spirits, wine and beer. It is estimated that in dollar volume, the annual outlay is now practically double what it was before the war.

Let me say at once that the dollar volume is not a true index of the increased consumption. That has not been as great as many have been led to believe. Every year, taxation has been increased. Each year, therefore, a dollar spent on alcoholic beverages has purchased a smaller quantity. A truer index of the increased consumption will be found in the quantities of spirits, wine and beer made available for consumption.

In the twelve months immediately preceding the outbreak of war, the quantity of spirits, both domestic and imported, released for sale in Canada, amounted to over three and a half million proof gallons. The corresponding figure for the third year of war was nearly five million proof gallons. This figure represents an increase of $37\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

During the twelve months immediately preceding the outbreak of war, the amount of domestic wine made available for sale was just over three million gallons. In the third year of war, it was nearly four million gallons. This represents an increase of more than 25 per cent.

The most reliable available index for increase in the consumption of beer is the increase in the use of malt for brewing. In the year prior to the outbreak of war, almost 140 million pounds of malt were used. The corresponding figure for the third year of war was over 232 million pounds. This represents an increase of over 60 per cent.

Effect on Morale

I have drawn your attention to the wartime increase in the consumption of alcoholic beverages. I should like now to mention some of the effects of increased consumption on our war effort. Let me speak first, of the effect generally, upon the morale of the people.

For one cause or another, it has become necessary to impose restrictions upon the use of many commodities, including not a few of the necessities of life. It has also been necessary to restrict methods of travel to the extent of making it impossible for large numbers of persons to move about freely, and even to share the customary enjoyments of home life, the society of friends, and family reunions. To very many, real hardship is experienced in seeking to meet the obligations of their daily tasks.

When gasoline and rubber are rationed, electric power and transport facilities are becoming increasingly scarce, and manpower shortages are developing, it is difficult for people to understand their increased use for other than the most vital needs of war. At a time when nearly all of our citizens are denying themselves, or are being denied, some of the comforts and enjoyments which, in normal times, have come to be regarded as necessities, to see others spending more money than ever on alcoholic beverages is bound to occasion resentment. It tends to destroy the spirit of mutual aid, and of community co-operation, which are never more needed than at a time of war.

Unless it can be shown that the increased production, distribution and sale of alcoholic beverages has meant no loss, but a gain, to the manpower available for war service, and that the increase in consumption has meant an increase of the efficiency of those who are planning and directing the war effort of the country, and of those who are engaged actively in war service, it must be apparent that increase in the production or consumption of alcoholic beverages, instead of strengthening, is only tending to undermine the effort others are making to win the war.

Effect on Workers

Our war effort—and not our war effort alone, but, in considerable part, the effort of the United Nations—depends on the achievements of Canadian working men and women. Their work is needed to help feed, clothe, equip and arm the Allied fighting forces. Every hour of useful work is precious.

Workers in industry are the partners in war of the fighting forces. There can be little doubt that absence from work, and inefficient work, are frequently due to intemperance. At a time when every moment counts, absenteeism among workers in essential war industries may occasion heavy loss. In this highly mechanized age, the absence of a single key man may slow up industrial processes for a large number of workers.

Industrial accidents are attributable in large measure to the same cause. Here again, the shortcoming of a single individual may affect many other lives. Recently I noted that, in one province alone, the rate of industrial accidents was equivalent to having on the casualty lists, from enemy action, an entire division *every month*.

I would not wish to imply that most industrial accidents are due to intemperance. But, certainly, temperance has never failed to reduce their number.

One thing is sure. Whether it be in the factories or workshops, in the mines or forests, in offices, or in homes, anything which impairs the efficiency of workers is almost certain to cost the lives and limbs of an increasing number of our soldiers, sailors and airmen.

Effect on Armed Forces

As to the advantages of temperance in the training of the armed forces, and of its benefits to the members of the forces themselves, there can be no doubt in the world.

The lowering of efficiency, due to the use of alcoholic beverages, is certain to slow down the progress of the recruit in training. In these days, when the utmost alertness is needed, whether on land, at sea, or in the air, such lowered efficiency is bound greatly to increase the likelihood of accidents in which others besides the offender may be involved. Just as a defect in a plane or a gun or a ship may cost men's lives: so may some carelessness or neglect in the sailor, the soldier or the airman endanger the lives of their comrades; and risk grave disaster in training, or in combat.

Then, too, failure to be temperate helps to establish habits which, later, may lead to a breakdown of morale. It is a common observation of seasoned soldiers that intemperate habits lead to reckless exposure when men are under fire, thereby occasioning needless casualties.

Only the man who disciplines himself strictly can stand for long the terrific pace of modern war. Those who indulge themselves too frequently and too freely will break under the strain. That was true in the last war. It is still more true in this.

Other Important Considerations

If I am outspoken of the dangers of intemperance to members of our armed forces, it is because we are all especially concerned for the welfare of those who are risking their lives in the cause of freedom.

The anxiety of most parents in seeing their sons and daughters enlist does not lie only in the fear of the physical dangers they may encounter. There are many mothers and wives in Canada who have steeled themselves to the loss, if need be, of their menfolk in the service of humanity. They have the courage to face that loss. The loss they cannot face is one that would not have occurred but for some preventable error of judgment. Even more perhaps they fear a loss of character in the one they love.

If we are to do our duty by the gallant young men and women who are in training and on service, we all should do whatever lies within our power to make their course through the hazards, the perils and the temptations of a time of war, as secure as it can possibly be made.

Let it be remembered, too, that at a time of war, nearly every one is under great strain. Just when we most need to be clear-headed, in order to face the hard facts before us, there is all too frequently a very real inclination to give way to dangerous tendencies merely as an escape from realities. Under the influence of stimulants, mistakes are quickly and often irretrievably made. The best insurance against all such risks is the cultivation of *temperance in all things*.

The Diversion of Materials and Manpower

As a nation, we cannot put forth a maximum effort unless our people are prepared, through self-denial and self-discipline, to maintain the highest possible individual efficiency, and unless they are also prepared to give priority to the needs of the armed forces and of those industries which serve the war effort.

At no time has the government done other than give priority to the needs of the fighting services and of our war industries. The change from a peacetime to a wartime economy is already so vast as to constitute for Canada an industrial revolution. That change, of necessity, has had to take account of the national economy as a whole, and of the means which would serve to bring about the desired results in the manner which would be most effective in the end.

Under the War Measures Act, the government has the widest powers to divert materials and manpower to meet wartime needs. The powers of the Department of Munitions and Supply are specifically framed to give priority in the use of materials to war production, and to the procurement of supplies for the armed forces. The Wartime Prices and Trade Board likewise has power, while safeguarding the production and distribution of essential civilian supplies, to take measures to release manpower. It then becomes the responsibility of the National Selective Service administration to allocate this manpower to meet the needs of the armed forces and war industries, and to ensure a sufficient supply of manpower for essential civilian needs.

On November 10th, the government extended the powers of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board to control all business undertakings and activities, and to curtail or eliminate specific activities. This authority has been used and will continue to be used by the Board to eliminate wasteful practices in industry. This is being done as rapidly as is consistent with an orderly absorption in essential war-time activities of the manpower so released. No useful object would be served by the arbitrary elimination of existing employment in advance of more essential demands for manpower.

What the Government Has Already Done

To restrict the traffic in alcoholic beverages, more has already been accomplished by the government than is generally realized. I have already referred to taxation and its effect in increasing prices. It is reliably estimated that over 60 per cent of the amount of retail sales of alcoholic beverages goes into the treasuries of the provinces or of the Dominion. There can be no doubt that increased prices resulting from taxation have acted as a deterrent to consumption.

The rationing of sugar has resulted in a curtailment of the production of domestic wines.

On November 1st, the entire distilling capacity of Canada was converted to the manufacture of industrial alcohol required for war industries and essential civilian needs.

On October 23rd, the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, in order to prevent a further increase in the manpower requirements of the brewing industry, issued an order limiting the supply of malt to the breweries, after November 1st, to the quantity used in the preceding twelve months. The Board, at the time, was careful to indicate that this was merely a preliminary step in the curtailment of an industry from which additional manpower would subsequently be needed for war purposes.

Reduction in Quantities and Alcoholic Strength

By Order in Council under the War Measures Act approved by His Excellency the Governor General to-day, the government has taken further important steps to curtail substantially the distribution and consumption of alcoholic beverages as a means towards achieving a total war effort.

The Department of National Revenue has been directed to reduce the quantity of beverage alcohol, both domestically manufactured and imported, to be released from bond and made available for sale. The limitation is based on the quantities released for sale in the twelve-month period which began on November 1st, 1941. For the twelve-month period which began on November 1st of the present year, the quantity of beer is to be reduced by 10 per cent; wine by 20 per cent; and spirits by 30 per cent.

Provision has also been made for a reduction in the alcoholic content of all distilled spirits to not greater than 30 per cent under proof. This reduction in alcoholic content becomes effective as soon as stocks now packaged and ready for sale are exhausted.

The "fortification" of wine with distilled spirits is prohibited.

Prohibition of Liquor Advertising

The greatly increased consumption of alcoholic beverages is very largely a direct result of the increased purchasing power created by wartime expenditures. All the reasons for the curtailment in the production, distribution, sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages apply to liquor advertising. Advertising is clearly not necessary to promote sales, nor is it justifiable if sales and consumption are to be curtailed.

The government has, therefore, decided to prohibit the advertising of spirituous liquors, wine and beer, throughout Canada, for the duration of the war.

A period of some six weeks has been afforded within which necessary adjustments may be made. Liquor advertising will, however, not be permitted in any part of Canada after February 1st, 1943.

Appeal to Provinces to Limit Hours of Sale

A word is now necessary on the relations of the Dominion and provincial governments with respect to the production and sale of alcoholic beverages. The federal government has to do with their production and importation; the provincial governments with their sale and distribution. In other words, while the Dominion government is in a position to control the quantities of spirits, wine and

beer to be released for consumption, the regulation of the retail sales of alcoholic beverages is a matter which is determined by each province according to its judgment.

It is true that under the War Measures Act, where the demands of war so require, the Dominion has an over-riding jurisdiction in this as in other fields. The government has felt that it would not be justified in exercising this jurisdiction except in matters of actual necessity connected with the prosecution of the war. For this reason, the federal government has refrained up to the present from taking any action in this field which it was felt the provinces themselves might be expected to take.

Eight Hour Daily Limit to Sales

An examination of existing wartime needs now makes it necessary for the federal government, in addition to the measures I have announced, to appeal to the provinces for their co-operation in further restricting the sale of alcoholic beverages. It has already been found that the curtailment of hours of sale, in those provinces where the hours have been cut down, is automatically resulting in a reduction of consumption of alcoholic beverages with evident beneficial results to Canada's war effort. While each province is able to judge best of its own places of sale and hours of sale, the federal government is of the opinion that in the interest of Canada's war effort, the total number of hours to be allotted for the sale of spirits, wine and beer, in any establishment where they may be sold, should not exceed 8 hours per day.

On behalf of the federal government, I wish now publicly to appeal to the provinces to lend their co-operation in furthering our country's war effort by effecting at as early a date as may be possible this much needed restriction.

The Force of Example

For the promotion of temperance something more is necessary than a reliance upon government action. Success in this endeavour depends more than all else upon the attitude of each individual, and upon the social outlook of the community.

The appeal for temperance is, as I said at the outset, an appeal for wartime service. Temperance is essential, if the services of men and women are to be employed to the best and most useful effect according to the physical capacity and ability of each. Nothing less will assure a total effort.

Few would venture to deny the advantages of temperance in increasing the efficiency of a nation at war. Yet many hesitate to advocate its benefits and to set the necessary example. As we all know, many persons, young and old, accept stimulants merely

because they think it is expected of them. They do not wish to occasion embarrassment to others by a refusal to take what is offered to them by way of hospitality. To most sensitive natures, it requires much more courage not to yield to some social habit, or fashion, or custom, than it does to face physical danger and peril. The highest chivalry always demands consideration of the feelings of others. A change of attitude in some things at a time of war might even be made to constitute a new code of honour.

Just as in to-day's struggle for world supremacy, new methods and weapons of war have come to replace other and less effective methods and weapons, so a total war effort has come to mean a new kind of leadership: leadership which in every town, in every social group, in every factory, in every barracks, and in every home, will set an example for others, and will give them the inspiration to follow it.

The Armour of God

At this Christmas season, and at the close of this year, in which, through the sacrifice of other lives, our own lives have been spared, shall we not resolve to do whatever lies within our power to save further sacrifice of human life, and to shorten this terrible war. The coming year can hardly fail to see all our armed forces engaged in a life and death struggle with the enemy. We may be called upon to witness the greatest ordeal through which our young country has ever been obliged to pass. To be equal to that ordeal, we must put on the whole armour of God.

A. R. J. J. J. J.



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